

BULLETIN OF THE LOS ANGELES MUSEUM

Vol. II

No. 4



SEATED FIGURE
by
BERNARD KARFIOL

OCTOBER - NOVEMBER - DECEMBER

1938

MUSEUM REORGANIZATION

In order that the many friends of the Museum may have a clear picture of the several changes that have recently occurred in the organization, we include a brief account of the more outstanding features of this important reorganization.

Probably the most fundamental changes have to do with the Board of Governors of the Museum.

The old Board was made up of nine members. Under the reorganization six new members were added, making a total membership of fifteen. The new members who have been added are:

SAMUEL MOODY HASKINS	ALLAN C. BALCH
JOHN J. GARLAND	HENRY W. O'MELVENY
WALTER C. ARENSBERG	MABEL OTIS BOOTH
FLORENCE G. BIXBY	

One of the above members was elected to fill a vacancy on the old Board.

On April 30, 1938 the MUSEUM ASSOCIATES was incorporated. This is essentially a non-profit holding corporation which is granted very wide powers in its program of assisting the work and upbuilding of the Museum and its affiliated organizations.

The fifteen incorporators are the present members of the Board of Governors. In addition to the names above enumerated, the directorate of MUSEUM ASSOCIATES includes:

DR. R. B. VON KLEINSMID	DR. ROCKWELL D. HUNT
DR. FORD A. CARPENTER	ROGER W. JESSUP
DR. OWEN C. COY	HOWARD ROBERTSON
WILLIAM PRESTON HARRISON	WILLIAM A. SPAULDING

This 'holding corporation' is formed for "scientific, literary and educational purposes and for the encouragement of activities in the fields of history, science and art, in aid of and in connection with the Los Angeles Museum of History, Science and Art, located in Exposition Park at Los Angeles, California, and all departments and divisions thereof wheresoever the same may be established or located." It has no official connection with any County or State subdivision.

The powers which are granted to MUSEUM ASSOCIATES cover a wide field, and include the right to "receive property by devise or bequest,—to acquire and hold property, real or personal, including shares of stock, bonds and securities,—to act as Trustee under any trust incidental to the principal objects of the corporation, and to receive, hold, administer and expend funds and property, subject to such trust," etc.

The plan of management of the Museum and of Otis Art Institute has been considerably altered as a result of

the passage of a new Ordinance (No. 3147 N.S.) which repealed the Ordinance of 1924.

Under this enactment there is created a new County department, known as the DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY, SCIENCE AND ART, which is placed under the management of a newly created Board of Governors, composed of fifteen members.

This board is vested with the "administrative charge and control over all county matters relating to history, science and art, and over the administration and maintenance of Los Angeles County Museum of History, Science and Art,—Otis Art Institute,—Hancock Park, and any other property hereafter acquired for or devoted to history, science or art."

The administration of the department, under the supervision of the Board of Governors, is placed in the hands of five Directors, as follows:

Director of Finance and Operation, to have general charge of financial and administrative matters.

Director of History and Anthropology, to have charge of exhibits and matters of a historical or anthropological nature in the Museum.

Director of Science, to have charge of matters pertaining to science in the Museum and at Hancock Park.

Director of Art, to have charge of exhibits, collections, and activities of an art nature in the department.

Director of Art Instruction, to have charge of Otis Art Institute.

In order to carry on the usual administrative routine an Administrative Council, composed of the five Directors as above given, has been created. This council carries on the usual details of management that are consistent with good 'housekeeping' practice within a well ordered museum. Its activities are subject to review by the Board of Governors, and to the usual regulations of Civil Service Commission and the Bureau of Budget and Research of Los Angeles County.

The present Administrative Council is composed of:

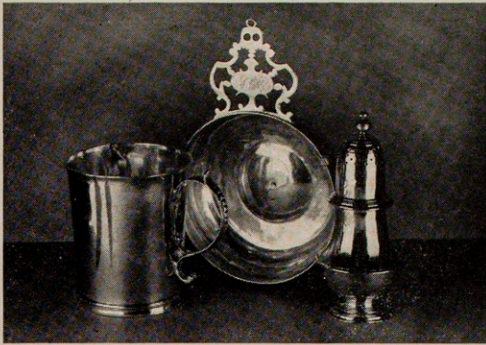
WILLIAM ALANSON BRYAN, Director of Finance and Operation;

JOHN ADAMS COMSTOCK, Director of Science;

WILLIAM MATHEWS HEKKING, Director of Art;

E. ROSCOE SCHRADER, Director of Art Instruction;

ARTHUR WOODWARD, Director of History and Anthropology.



AMERICAN SILVER

Cup, *John Coney* (Boston, about 1700); Porringer, *John Potwine* (Boston, about 1730-37); Caster, *Simeon Soumaine* (New York City, about 1725-40). From the Collection of Mrs. John Emerson Marble.

The technique and manner of early American silverwork are seen to follow five successive, and distinct, periods of development. The second of these (*circa* 1700-40) is here represented by three pieces chosen from the Marble Collection. All three are characteristic of their time, in being American interpretations of contemporary English and Dutch fashions in silverwork,—that is, in showing the foreign style reduced to its essential elements.

The American silversmith, like the American cabinet-maker, clung to the traditions of the Queen Ann style for more than a generation after it had become obsolete in England. The second period of American work remains "Queen Anne" throughout the reign of George I and for two decades under George II;—for, with utility his first ideal, the Colonial silversmith delighted in the clean line and plain finish of the Queen Anne models. With ornament he was ever sparing, relying upon the form itself to satisfy the eye. He expressed his intimate feeling for the very metal in permitting subtle curves of unadorned surface, rather than superficial engraving or pompous repoussage, to remain the sufficient design.

American work of the period thus becomes an interval of logic and simplicity, between the rich excesses of an earlier time and the over-refinement of a later fashion.

John Coney (1655-1722), to whom Paul Revere Sr. was afterward apprenticed, gives us a silver cup of just and sober character, without embellishment whatsoever to interrupt its smooth upward curve. The porringer of *John Potwine* (1698-1792), which was made for a day when the cereal grains were commonly served as porridge, and not baked into loaves of bread, is of a design peculiarly appropriate to the material used,—a porringer that could scarcely have been fashioned of anything but silver! And finally, the caster by *Simeon Soumaine* (1685- about 1750) shows respect for honest function, and scorn of the merely pretty, that everywhere distinguish the work of the early Colonial craftsman.

—G. N.-W.

GIFT TO THE MUSEUM

Seated Figure by Bernard Karfiol (illustrated on the cover of this Bulletin) has been presented to the Museum by Miss Cora Eshman. This makes a valuable addition to the Museum's collection of American paintings.

Mr. Karfiol was born in Budapest of American parents. He has received awards at many exhibitions including the Carnegie International; the First Wm. A. Clarke prize and the Corcoran Gold Medal, Washington, D.C. This picture received Honorable Mention in our Pan-American Exhibition in 1925.

Mr. Karfiol is represented in the Metropolitan Museum; the Phillip's Memorial Gallery; Whitney Museum; Museum of Modern Art; Detroit Institute of Art and other Museums and Galleries.

Miss Eshman has also presented the Museum with two paintings by Guy Rose.

In the 1660-70's, when tea began to be known and used among Englishmen, it was first valued as a medicinal drug and later, though regarded only as a pleasurable beverage, still so highly regarded as to be kept in small caddies equipped with locks and keys. The more precious varieties then sold for a hundred guineas or more per pound, and tea-caddies were therefore of small capacity.

In contrast to this, the Mabury Collection gives us a Korean caddy of that day, standing two feet high without its carved wooden base. It carries two knotted silk ropes, less for actual carrying than for sheer ornament of this—the Gargantua of tea-caddies, the caddy *sans pareil*.



PEWTER CADDY

Of exceptional size, with accents and motifs of bronze inlay. Korea, 17th or early 18th Century. From the Collection of Miss B. Mabury.

In manner, the pewterwork of Europe or America seems timid and uneventful by comparison. We aspire to nothing so monumental, either as to size, or character. It has never even occurred to us, in these centuries of our own craft, to combine warm bronze with the soft base-metal of our pewter artifacts! But here in Korea, as in China before, bronze has been employed to accent and define the simple outline of a pewter vessel,—lines of bronze for the ridges down its bulbous sides, inlaid bronze for the “shou” (longevity) symbol on its lid, and an inset swastika of bronze on the inner lid, for good omen.

Here, in however humble material, we discover a symbol of the Oriental artisan’s ideal. Whether with brush and ink, with many-coated lacquer, with porcelain and its enamel, or the silk woven thread, the eastern worker gives us always an essential and complete report of his impression—thoughtfully considered, done into logical form, and finished with strokes which not only express the character of his material, but the substance of his personal and individual attitude as well.

G. N.W.

Crewel embroidery (that is, needlework done in the bright woolen threads called “crewels”) had been a genteel pastime among ladies of the English court at the time of Charles II. And naturally, the American colonists of the latter 17th century held it most fashionable in the way of bed-covers, bed hangings, “carpetts” (table covers), and even apparel. It became much used, and much abused; and very little of it remains today.

The technique of crewel embroidering, however, like favorite habits in the other crafts, was sustained in this country generation after generation,—a century or more after it had become merely “old fashioned” in England.

As late as the 1820’s we find occasional American bed-covers in this traditional manner. Sometimes the embroidery is combined with “hooking” (little loops of fabric drawn slightly through the fabric) for variety of effect; but essentially, even these un-orthodox creations of the 19th century are direct and near descendants of their early progenitors.

The styles changed, of course. Where Stuart crewel-work had aped the patterns of India, or the designs of



AMERICAN EMBROIDERY

A bed-cover, worked in crewels on homespun blanketing. Connecticut, *circa* 1800. The Gift of Sarah Tracy Kroger.

Italian brocade, American ingenuity devised all sorts of quaint and original motifs,—great sprawling leaves that never were, birds and beasts of unrecognizable sort, fanciful nosegays of improbable flowers, and geometrical figures more haphazard than safely balanced. Sophistication crept into the American scheme, in its effort at neo-classic scalloped borders or a tidier and tighter arrangement of its details. But American crewelwork, whether early or late, is liberty-loving. Nothing shall restrict one’s freedom to portray astonishing (and indeed delightful) fancies, without regard for Nature itself, or reasonable scale, or polite colours. Obviously, the needleworkers didn’t pretend to be taken seriously. Obviously, they were having fun,—which is perhaps the greatest charm of these, their rare handiwork.

G. N.W.

“The practical man is sometimes shortsighted due to his close contact with applied art and applied science.

“He forgets that much of the applied art and applied science of today was the impractical, visionary pure art and pure science of yesterday.”

SOLDIERS OF EDUCATION

Harvard University recently announced a new policy by which Juniors and Seniors are released of practically all routine practices and placed on their own initiative, subject to a final proving examination.

The trend and stress of this process of learning is toward individual research and personal curiosity. It will largely replace the old process of taking notes from the learning of the professors, like going to the fountain with a pitcher and bringing home what you did not spill on the way—which, of necessity, was sometimes little enough.

It is the difference between the development of learning as between humans, and the practice of training as applied to a definite task,—the manual of arms!

In the past, American schools have paid more attention toward training in an academic sense than toward learning: Soldiers of education! Our graduates of American colleges for the most part were soldiers of education; and as a result they were best fitted as instructors of more—"soldiers of education."

It was usually the renegade students, unquestionably bright, but unfitted by nature or instinct to submit to this type of education, who rebelled against the system; who thought out their own philosophy of life in after years; and who, if opportunity favored them, committed themselves to the same process of personal search into the factual secrets of business, chemistry—in fact, of life in general,—which Harvard hopes to install into her Juniors and Seniors.

By so doing, she is calling-the-turn on the "seat warmers", eliminating them to make room for those with intellectual curiosity. Left to his own devices, the unfitted student soon becomes bored, and his little flame will flicker and go out. Thus will be eliminated the unsensitive, unimaginative mind.

Undoubtedly, this will give rise to a new problem, namely: the *training* of the unimaginative mind for practical tasks.

One cannot educate people. The thirst for knowledge must come from within. But one can train lesser, unimaginative minds to do definite tasks of the day, the moment,—tasks still so informal as not to be done by machinery.

Harvard has hit at the very root of the evil in academic learning. By the new procedure, creative thinking

may be brought to its logical fruition by astute intellectual curiosity, as against the old method of committing to memory dogmatic criteria, idioms, or custom.

The question arises, are we ready to adopt this system generally? There is a very close analogy as well as an essential difference in strictly academic and creative painting, observable in the above old versus new program of education.

No great painter ever attempted consciously to become original. "Originality" someone has well said, "occurs only by reason of an unrelenting sincere endeavor to find adequate means wherewith to set forth ideas."

Lack of technical competence is one of the first causes of befuddling and bungling an issue, but if we could entirely forget having seen the work of others in art, or in photography, and approach nature and life with the same freshness of viewpoint and unquenchable curiosity with which the scientists threw out all philosophy in an effort to get at truth and fidelity of statement, and produce our impressions with the same fidelity for recording a certain sense of physical fact, and the same truth in reporting experience,—then, originality in art would suddenly become, unconsciously, an accomplished fact.

The almost infinite variety of human points of view, and emotional reaction, would then be given a fairer chance of self-expression.

After an art student has been through a long, academic grind he is under a handicap not unlike the son of an illustrious father. Too much is expected of him; too much has already been accomplished; he is not given opportunity to meditate, creatively.

The work-a-day world demands mass production, both in education and art. To supply this demand, there will always be necessary a routine academic "training".

It seems only fair that somewhere in our educational system there should be a place where the original-minded may have an opportunity to fail in themselves, or succeed, instead of having failure drilled into them at the start by an educational "manual of arms".

Art education has been conscious of this fact. It is interesting that our great institutions of learning are coming to the same realization.

—William Mathews Hekking.

SCHEDULE OF EXHIBITORS
OCTOBER : NOVEMBER : DECEMBER
1938

FINE ARTS DEPARTMENT

OCTOBER:

California Water Color Society
Eighteenth Annual Exhibition
September 30 to November 6

Mateo Hernandez
Sculpture and Drawings
September 20 to October 20

NOVEMBER:

Loan Exhibition of Paintings
Colored Lithographs by Charlot and other contemporary artists
Fifty Prints of the Year

DECEMBER:

Loan Exhibition from New York (Contemporary American)

Please watch daily papers for further announcements.

JUNIOR MUSEUM DEPARTMENT

OCTOBER:

Natural History of Los Angeles County:
A cross section of the common natural life that may be seen in this vicinity.

NOVEMBER:

Stamp Exhibit:
"Transportation and Heros" as illustrated by postage stamps—loaned
by B. W. H. Poole.

DECEMBER:

Doll Exhibition:
Twelfth Annual Doll Show — historical, foreign, and costume dolls
from all over the world.
Stamp Show:
Posters, designed and illustrated with postage stamps. Contributed by
children under eighteen.



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